GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1259
ANSWERED ON:26.02.2003
INDO-SINO JOINT WORKING GROUP
PRAKASH V. PATIL

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the outcome of several meetings of Indo-Sino joint working group;

(b) whether the Government are hopeful for a breakthrough in resolving Indo-Sino border dispute following change of regime in China and visit of Indian Prime Minister to China; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) to (c): The India-China Joint Working Group (JWG) on the Boundary Question has met fourteen times. The 14th meeting of the JWG was held in New Delhi on 21st November, 2002.

India and China seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question through peaceful consultations. We signed an agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the India-China Border Areas in 1993 and a second agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas in 1996.These two Agreements provide an institutional framework for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the border areas. The process of clarification of the LAC has started within existing mechanisms. Maps of the LAC in the Middle Sector have been exchanged. Discussions have commenced on clarification of the LAC in the Western Sector of the India-China boundary.

During the 14th meeting of the JWG, both sides reviewed the ongoing process of LAC clarification. They also continued discussions on further Confidence Building Measures. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Expert Group would be held in Beijing.

Both sides agreed to set up a new dialogue mechanism on Policy Planning in the two Foreign Offices. Both sides agreed, inter alia, on the need to substantially enhance trade and economic relations, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. Both sides also reviewed the functioning of the existing dialogue mechanisms such as on counter terrorism and security. Regional and international issues were also discussed. Chinese side conveyed that China sees its relations with India in a broader perspective and not only in the perspective of South Asia.